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Complete

Arranged

An Essay
on

Dysentery

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Faculty
of the
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of
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By

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of
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Dysentery

Dysentery is generally understood to be a diseased condition of the large intestine, indicated by frequent evacuations from the bowels accompanied with colic pain tenesmus and general febrile affections. But when we consider the range of inflammation caused by dysentery we cannot see how with propriety this disease can be strictly confined to the large intestines. In every circumstance indicates that the Epidemic like the exanthematous and typhoid process is a disease from the intoxication of the blood accompanied through the reception or development of a morbid poison of the blood and localizing itself upon the large intestines in the form of an irritant. Some writers have laboriously hard to prove that dysentery was not a peculiar disease of itself -

but is a Typhus, a Chlorosis, a Rheumatism, which forms its focus upon the colon and rectum and thus forms a colic typhus, a colic Chlorosis &c. But we are of the opinion that dysentery should be considered the local expression of a morbid poison which may vary but in its origin and characteristics.

A large proportion of cases occur from some earthy poison and should be considered as having a malarious origin. And it thus appears in connection with Typhus and is observed to be more common in marshy regions in Summer and Autumn.

Indemical Character

As we have stated before the principle seat of Dysentery is the large intestines, but the seat in regard to its point of concentration and termination is the mucous

membrane of the largest intestines.
 And the principle changes are found from
 the caecum to the rectum, but the affection
 is not confined to this portion of the intestine
 or its mucous membrane. The pathological
 changes often pass beyond the caecum to the
 small intestine. Stomach. Liber anceps.
 The disease sometimes affects the sub-
 mucous tissue, muscular coat and even
 reaches the peritoneal coat. After the
 inflammation attacks the mucous mem-
 brane, the epithelium is elevated in
 small vesicles and is cast off in small
 patches, so that the membrane lying
 underneath looks scoriated.

Dr Cheyne observes that the small intes-
 tines are affected and also the mucous
 membrane of the Stomach in proportion

As the large intestines were diseased.
 Ulceration generally shows itself in the
 colon and in the part nearest the cecum
 but in this part it is superficial. as the
 bowel was traced down towards the colon
 the ulceration became deeper and more
 extensive. sometimes there are four or
 five inches of rectum perfectly sound to all
 appearance. In cases where death has occurred
 in the early stage of the disease from
 violent febrile action or some other cause
 the stomach and small intestines have
 been found very much inflamed. of a
 deep red or purple color. soft and pulpy
 with uneven surface and sometimes gran-
 ulated. In some cases the liver is very much
 affected and dissection has shown that it
 is sometimes ulcerated.

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Sometimes there is thickening of the intestinal wall - caused by a serous infiltration into the sub mucous cellular tissue. And penetrating by degrees into the muscular.

Causes which excite Dysentery
It is well understood that dysentery is far more frequent in the summer and fall months than at any other seasons of the year - The animal frame at this season of the year is much debilitated from having been exposed for a long time to the stimulus of a high atmospheric temperature and in many cases that of the direct rays of the sun. The digestive organs and intestinal canal necessarily partaking more or less of this debility are easily irritated and thrown out of order than-

at any other season of the year.

The causes that produce Dysentery may be of two kinds. Direct and Sympathetic.

The direct are chiefly those of diet, and may consist of any sudden application of cold to the stomach below its actual temperature such as drinking cold water and eating ice cream when the system is in a very heated condition, eating flatulent herbs or acid fruits when the stomach is too weak to digest them.

Drinking impure water, especially such as consists of decomposed animal or vegetable substances. In this last case the disease is often Endemic, of which we have a striking example, while the Soldiers are stationed in the barracks at Cork, while the disease was raging with

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it was observed that the troops were aff-
fected with water contaminated by an influx
from the public rivers and rendered
brackish by an intermixture with the tide.
Their beverage was immediately changed
and the disease suddenly disappeared.

The Sympathetic causes are those which
operate upon the intestines through the
medium of other organs. chiefly those
of the skin and lungs, as exposure to cold
drafts of air when the body is heated, wet-
clothes and wet feet, producing like the
last a sudden transition from heat to
cold causing the blood to return to the
internal organs, and being there in
larger quantities than usual, get up
irritation and inflammation as a result.

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And as the intestines are often in a weakened condition excited by the impurities in water. so they are by the impurities or animalcules that are floating so commonly in the air. in miasmatic regions and hence this disease assumes an Epidemic or in the former an Endemic form.

Dysentery

This disease may occur with or without any forewarning symptoms. in the former case there is general uneasiness in the abdomen especially in the lower portion of the colon with a bearing down sensation, general weakness and loss of appetite. These symptoms may be accompanied with diarrhoea or constipation. Sometimes the local symptoms

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make their appearance before the general
ones and in some mild cases it may
run its extent without more or any
fever. Sometimes the local and general
symptoms make their appearance at
the same moment. The patient expe-
riencing a chill at the same time he
has pain and tenderness. When the fever
precedes for sometime the disordered state
of the intestines the diarrhoea is one
dependant upon some other cause. In dif-
ferent cases of diarrhoea or rather dysentery
we have a regular gradation of severity
from a very slight effect of a small part
of the rectum and colon with slight fever
passing off in a few days up to an exten-
sive severity of the disease through the
whole intestines and even attacking

The liver and spleen until it becomes
one of the most fatal diseases that
the human flesh is heir to. But the
extent of the disease is measured by the
susceptibility of the patient and the
degree that it is simple or complicated.
Generally more mucous inflammation
~~is a mild~~ of the intestines is a mild
affection. But it is often associated
with some other diseased organs or
morbid condition of the system generally,
which has a tendency to complicate the
disease and under it more fatal.

Simple Dysentery

In the commencement of this disease we
have generally gripping pains in the abdomen
which are not regular in their appearance
or position and followed by a discharge

from the bowels which gives the patient
relief. In a short period after the evacuation
there is a sense of weight in the abdomen
with a desire to go to stool accompanied
with a sense of heat and burning, but
when they go to stool are unable to discharge
any thing but mucus and sometimes
mucus streaked with blood. This severe
pain that is experienced by the patient is caused
by the fecal matter passing over that
of the rectum which has been made very
sensible by irritation and inflammation.
As the disease advances tenesmus
is the most prominent symptom. The
calls for stool are more frequent and
tenesmus so severe that the straining
sometimes produces prolapsus ani-
especially in children-

The discharges are seldom less than ten or
twelve in twenty four hours, in a regular
form of the disease. But sometimes in some
cases they amount to from one to three hundred
etc. - After a few evacuations which are
more superficial, the discharge consists
of a whitish mucus which is sometimes
streaked with blood. And sometimes the
discharges consist of almost pure blood
caused by the erosion of some blood vessel
with those as the disease advances one little
shreds of membrane and some times the
membrane is seen in little patches.
In some cases there is ~~more or less~~ less headache
are more or less harden lumps of feces
called (Scybala) formed by the spasmotic
contraction which is often runs through
the intestines. fetid evacuations are

are generally followed with some relief.
At first the evacuations have a little smell
but after a little while they acquire an
odor which seems to be peculiar to dysen-
tery. In all cases of dysentery there is more
or less fever. pulse quick and full. skin hot
and dry. insufficient quantity of urine
tongue moist and coated with a whitish
mucus a fur. Sometimes the impressions
made up the nervous system (in cases of recent,
is so great that it is with great difficulty
that the vital forces are able to react.
In some cases there is a sensation of
hollowness in the abdomen. attended
with cold clammy skin. feeble & irregular
pulse, and sometimes nausea and vomit-
ing. This stage of the disease generally
passes off, and the disease terminates

favorably for the patient in eight or ten days.
There are some cases that the inflammation
is to such an extent and the shock
to the nervous system so great that
it will not react. In this case the patient
has from the beginning a very feeble pulse
and also frequent. A cold clammy skin.
The features express great anxiety. count-
enance sunken. Purple hue around the
eyes, at the roots of the fingers nails, and
upon the lips. In this stage of the disease
the pulsations are very frequent - and
accompanied with great tension. The
arteries are tumid and very tense
and very susceptible to pressure.
Such cases generally prove fatal in a few
days after they have arrived to this stage.
Should ordinary cases not improve in

ten or twelve days there is danger
of the disease assuming a more
dangerous form. all the symptoms
becoming changed or aggravated. The
tongue assume a dry appearance
strips off its fur and is red smooth
and sometimes gashed. When dysentery
terminates favorably the pains generally
diminish in their severity and the
interval between their recurrence is
longer than usual. The stools are more
profuse but less frequent and possess
more of a fecal character. and finally
nothing remains except a slight dis-
charge which passes off in a few days.

Catarrhal form

This form of dysentery has usually a short
precuratory stage. The fever generally very slight.

and not infrequently entirely vanishing
after the disease has become local.
This form of the disease is not contagious
The functions of the skin and kidneys
are not much interfered with.

The pain in the abdomen is of a colicky
nature. The abdomen is warm soft
and not very sensitive to pressure.
The evacuations are partially colored
with bile. frequent streaks or masses with
blood. There is slight tenderness this
form of the disease continues generally from
eight to twelve days and terminates
in health.

Inflammatory Stage

This stage is known from the commence-
ment by a severe chill which sometimes
continues for many hours. and then is

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followed by severe heat. The dysentery
commences with great fury. Soon there
are developed signs of abdominal infl-
ammation. The pain in the bowels
is continuous and increasing in sever-
ity. The abdomen is very sensitive to
pressure. Tenesmus very severe. Sometimes
in the commencement of this disease there
is a large quantity of blood discharged
which relieves the patient. Sometimes the
stool contains membranous masses.
At this stage of the disease there is frequently
cramp in the bladder and calf of the legs.
Inflammation in this case may not
be confined to the large intestines, but
frequently extends to the liver and spleen.
The pulse is full frequent but sometimes
suppressed. Tongue red and rough.

Sometimes covered with a white coat -
In this stage of the disease the thirst is
very great. face red eyes more or less
injected. urine has a redish cast -
skin hot and dry - The length of the
disease is from four to twenty one
days - In profuse cases the stools
have a cadaverous smell. and pass off
involuntarily. Delirium sinking pulse
tongue becomes dry - Inflammatory
dysentery may terminate in gangrene
or ulceration amounting to perforation.

Adynamic Form

In this form of the disease the whole sys-
tem is deeply affected. there is headache
vertigo and great prostration, often before the
invasion of the peculiar dysenteric symptoms
there is a violent chill a sensation as though

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cold water was being poured over the back
and generally the diarrhoea is preceded by
these symptoms. The acute stage is distin-
guished by the great number of stools.
The discharges are of a brownish and sometimes
of a blackish color they possess a very bad
odor which is similar to a cadaverous
smell. These evacuations are so acrid
that they excoriate the parts about the
anus. The fever that accompanies this is
of a torpid character. The pulse is small
skin hot and dry at times but most
generally cold especially the extremities.
The features have a sunken appearance.
The tongue dry cold colored dark brown,
sometimes there is a rust upon the skin
towards the close of the disease. There is violent
hicough and vomiting of a dark substance.

involuntary discharges and often bleeding
from the bowels. This form of the disease proo-
ves fatal in from ten to fourteen days.

Bilious Cholera

In dysentery of this kind a bilious con-
dition of the system generally precedes the
dysentery. There is frequently discharge by
vomiting and by stool bilious matter
yellow grass green or dark green fluid
which relieves the patient. This form of dysen-
tery is often complicated with inflammation
of the liver which sometimes terminate in
abscess. The crisis of this disease often occurs
with a discharge of fecal matter and a
puslulous eruption upon the face, around
the mouth and nose.

Treatment

It is essential that the patient should be placed in a room that can be well ventilated so that the patient may have a sufficient amount of fresh air - great care should be taken to prevent as far as possible the accumulation of any effluvia or miasm. This is of almost importance for the welfare of the patient - as for the safety of the nurse attending great care should be taken about the cleanliness of the bed. The discharges should not be allowed to remain in the room but removed immediately. A bed pan should be used for the evacuations, and not allow the patient to get up, as he will be exposed to cold air and also weakened by getting up every few moments. The extremities should be kept warm - Every thing should

be withheld from the stomach that is of an
irritating character. Cold water should not
be allowed as it at once excites the stomach.

but its place may be supplied with water
that has been boiled and cooled again - or
mucilaginous drinks such as rice water.
Barley water, oatmeal gruel &c. Milk, provided
it is well coagulated with acid flour is very good.
The white of an egg beaten up in water is also
very good -

In the appearance of this Epidemic disease
it is the duty of every Physician to study
thoroughly its epidemic characters and then
with careful judgment select such remedies
as shall be competent to combat the disease
in all its forms.

Medicines

Acute— Should be given in the first-
commencement of the disease, and when
there is high inflammatory fever, quick pulse
and full pulse. Hot dry skin, cold limbs
and tumid, frequent small stools and
tenesmus.

Alves— By repeated trials this remedy
has proved itself to be one of considerable im-
portance in some cases of dysentery, when
the abdomen is distended and very sen-
sitive to touch, violent pressing and
burning pains along the course
of the rectum or colon—
stools stringy evacuations mixed with
blood and attended with violent tenes-
mus. Heat and smartness when at
stool, excoriation about the anus, tongue
dry and red

Chamanilla - This remedy is useful when the disease has arrived from exposure to cold atmosphere when in a state of perspiration. When we find foul tongue with bitter taste in the mouth and bilious stools before tenesmus makes its appearance. This remedy is best in the first stages of dysentery.

Capricum - - - - -

This remedy is valuable when we have frequent small bloody or mucous stools with tenesmus. Discharge followed by great thirst and if drink is allowed this is a chill. severe colic pain in the umbilical region. Thirst and fever from evening to midnight.

Carbo-Vegatubalis - This is also indicated in the malignant form of dysentery.

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When arsenicum fails to relieve the patient. symptoms very much like those for arsenicum. The patient has cold breath and cold surface. if the pulsus edon does not disappear after using Carbo. Veg. - China should be tried.

Mercurious Corrosives - is the chief remedy in most forms of dysentery. It is most indicated in full dysentery when the days are hot and nights cold. and when there are small and frequent bloody stools continuing all the time night and day with but little cessation. Constant-cutting pain in the bowels

with great urging and tenesmus. The
colic pain often extends to the back with
chills. Heat. Thirst - a great anxiety

Nux Vomica - is very useful in many
forms of dysentery. The indications are
frequent small and bloody mucus dis-
charges with urging and tenesmus
violent - cutting pain in the umbilical
region. internal heat - great thirst
bitter or putrid taste in the mouth.

Armenicum - is one of the most important
remedies when the disease is Epidemic
and in other forms of the disease. It is
called for when we have great weakness

And frustration from the commencement
 stools black, bloody, acrid, putrid and
 often involuntary. violent burning
 pain in the abdomen - rapid sinking
 of the vital energies. pulse small and in-
 termittent. coldness of the extremities
 cadaverous smelling discharges from
 the nose and urine. dry stopped black tongue
 hiccup and raging thirst with full
 sunken countenance.

Pelladonna - is very valuable in the
 inflammatory varieties when the patient
 is of a sanguine temperament full habit
 lively ardent disposition. Tendency of blood

to the head. whitish tongue with
the tip slightly red and inclined to be
dry. spasmodic and colicky pains
in the bowels constant urging to
stool and great tenesmus. strong
bilious vomiting evening fever with
intense thirst.

Calacynth.

Calacynth is very good for violent colicky
pains in the umbilical region followed
with bloody stools mixed with portions
of membranes attended with great tenes-
mus distention of the abdomen, pul-
sus ~~at~~ the rectum.

Plumbum - when there is a violent form consisting of almost entire bloody discharges with continual cuttings in the bowels and stomach. fever. Burning in the anus during the evacuations and continuation of tenesmus after stool.

Veratrum - is very appropriate in dysentery when we have watery discharges mixed with feces or dysentery accompanied with vomiting and coldness of the surface. great weakness, and cramp in the calves with cold sweat. Discharges are more common in the night and followed by calic and chill. Tenesmus is not present.

Sulphur. is a very valuable remedy in
 very bad cases where other remedies will
 not, owing to chronic discuria, control
 the disease.

There are many other remedies that are good
 in this disease such as Pulsatilla.

Antimonium crudum - Bryonia - Sulfur-
 ara - Nitric acid. Celestium.

Sometimes for the comfort of the patient it is
 necessary to give sitz baths also in
 injections of starch or the white of an
 egg beat up in water.